

~ **SAKAI READS** ~
Expanding Perspectives DISCUSSION GUIDE

“We may have different religions, different languages, different colored skin, but we all belong to one human race” ~ Kofi Annan.

“Fiction gives us empathy: it puts us inside the minds of other people, gives us the gifts of seeing the world through their eyes. Fiction is a lie that tells us true things, over and over” ~ Neil Gaiman

Introductory Discussion - (5 min.)

Begin by reading the definition and quote above. Invite students to discuss the following:

- Describe what compassion towards others looks like and give an example.
- Describe what compassion towards self looks like and give an example.

Title Specific Discussion - (15 min.)

- Choose some questions from the list provided for your group’s story to discuss.

Summary Discussion - (10 min.)

- How did reading the story help deepen your understanding of the importance of having compassion for others?
- Why do you think reading fiction novels can help inspire compassion in people?
- Do you have other suggestions for how to help increase compassion in our world?

Number the Stars by *Lois Lowry*

Themes

Family, friends, compassion, loyalty, prejudice, courage.

Summary

Annemarie attempts to help rescue her friend Ellen and her friend's family after the Nazis invade Denmark. Will Annemarie and her family manage to send them over the border to safety in time? This is a book about World War II.

Discussion questions

1. What kind of friendship do Annemarie and Ellen have?

2. How are Annemarie and Ellen alike? What are some of their differences?
3. How does the encounter with the Nazi soldiers on the way home from school affect Annemarie? How would it make you feel to be in a similar situation? Is it hard to even imagine?
4. What does Mrs. Rosen mean when she tells the girls, "It is important to be one of the crowd, always?"
5. Sometimes the adults in the book don't always tell the truth. Why is it all right for them to lie? What's dangerous about the truth in their situation?
6. Select a part from the book that you really liked and read it aloud. What is it about this passage that made you remember it?
7. What gives Annemarie the courage to deliver the lunch basket to her Uncle Henricks? What do you think you would have done in the same situation?
8. What do you predict is the future for Ellen and Annemarie? Where will their lives take them?
9. What did you know about the Holocaust or the Danish Resistance before reading this book? Did reading the book inspire you to learn more?"
10. What does the title of the book, "Number the Stars," mean? Is it a fitting title for this book? Why?